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ESSENTIAL TRUTHS AND FORMAL ERRORS OF ORTHODOXY.

ESSAY VI.

Justification by Faith.

THAT portion of the New Testament which speaks so earnestly of justification by faith is by many supposed to have become obsolete for all useful purposes at the present time. The doctrine that "we are justified by faith, and not by works," it is supposed, was intended for the benefit of the Jews alone, and to amount to this, — that admittance to the privileges of the gospel is to be obtained, not by practising the ceremonies and external ritual of the Jewish law, but by a simple belief in Jesus Christ. Accordingly, as no one now-a-days endeavors to become a Christian by practising the Jewish ceremonies, we suppose that there is no present need of this doctrine; and, when we come upon it in the Scripture, we turn over the pages in search of something more practical and profitable. As, in the book of Acts, we read, that, "when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O Jews! reason would

that I should bear with you; but, if it be a question of words and names and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters:" so we, when Paul is about to open his mouth to speak to us of this doctrine, think it a mere question of words and names and of the Jewish law, and interrupt him to ask him for something *practical.* If he has any thing to say to us of wrong-doing or wicked conduct, it would be reasonable to hear him; but we will be no judge of such matters as this.

There are many persons, who, while they can understand the Gospels and enjoy them, find it difficult to understand and enjoy the writings of the Apostle Paul. Among these writings, the most difficult is the Epistle to the Romans, and especially that part of it which treats of this doctrine of justification by faith. Any thing which can be done to remove this difficulty will do good; for the writings of Paul are so intimately connected with the rest of the New Testament, that it is not easy to reject them, and yet to believe the rest. It can be done, no doubt; but it is done with difficulty. It is as if one part of the foundation of the house had given way: perhaps the house will not fall; but it has become unsafe. It is as if a part of the wall of a city had been battered down: the breach may be defensible from within; but it is also practicable from without. At all events, we miss the satisfaction of a complete faith, perfect and entire, round and full.

Besides, may there not be something important for us to know in this part of the New Testament? Are we quite sure we do not need these very doctrines, and that they will do us good?

We have said that it is sometimes thought that the questions discussed by Paul were only Jewish questions, — not human questions; that they belonged only to that time, not to all time. But, though the form which they

assumed was temporary and local, there is reason to believe that the substance of the question is one belonging to human nature in every age; that it is the question of the spirit and the letter, the substance and the form, the root and the branches, the inside of religion and the outside. While contending against a particular Jewish error, the apostle unfolded principles by which similar errors may be opposed and refuted in every age.

At all events, it is a matter of fact, that there never has been in the Church any great religious movement which has not immediately gone back to the Apostle Paul, and planted itself on his doctrine of justification by faith. This was the watchword of Luther, and the soul of the Reformation. Luther and his companions armed themselves with this doctrine to contend against the great power of the Papacy and the Romish Church.

Let us, then, endeavor to see what we can of the truth there may be in this doctrine.

And, first, let us see what the doctrine does not mean, and what it does mean.

To be justified by faith does not mean that we are to be saved by our opinions. Wesley says very well, that a string of opinions is no more Christian faith than a string of beads is Christian practice. To say that a man can be saved by holding certain opinions instead of certain other opinions, is to say what is contradicted by all experience; for experience shows us that there are good men holding every variety of opinion, and bad men holding every variety of opinion. But God saves men by making them good: therefore men are not saved by their opinions. Let us suppose that men are to be saved by the opinion that Jesus is the Christ: then we ought to find that all men holding that opinion are on the way of salvation; that is, are becoming good men. But this is far from being the case.

In fact, the connection between mere opinion of any kind, and goodness, is very distant and indirect. No doubt, in the long-run, opinion affects character; but it is only in the long-run that it does so. And, at all events, the doctrine of the New Testament is very distinct and decided, that men may hold very sound opinions, and yet not be in the way of salvation. The scribes and Pharisees held very sound opinions; and Jesus told his disciples to do whatever they said, but not to imitate their works; for their doctrine was much better than their lives.

Nor does the apostle mean to say that one can be saved without morality. He certainly does not mean to undervalue goodness; for, in that case, he would contradict his own teachings, which uniformly declare, as all the rest of the Bible declares, that without holiness no man can see the Lord. It is certainly a very superficial view which is satisfied with supposing that an earnest man, as the apostle certainly was, devoting his life, as he certainly did, to the teaching of Christianity, with such a grand intellect as he certainly possessed, could assert with so much energy a doctrine plainly contradicting common sense, daily observation, the plain teachings of Jesus, and his own uniform doctrine elsewhere.

Some persons have a short method of getting over the difficulty by saying that Paul did not himself know what he meant. They assume that he was talking at random. It would be about as wise, when we open Newton's "Principia" and cannot understand it, to say that Newton was talking at random; or, when we cannot understand Plato or some other profound metaphysician, to declare directly that they did not themselves know what they were talking about. No doubt, this is the shortest and easiest way of getting out of such difficulties; but perhaps not the most modest nor the most wise.

When an earnest man, a profound man, a man in the highest degree practical, a man who has done the greatest work for Christianity which has been done since its foundation, sums up his doctrine in a comprehensive maxim like this, it is perhaps wise to admit at once, that he had a meaning, and probably an important one.

"No doubt, he *had* a meaning," it may be said; "but has he any meaning *now?* His formula meant something for the Jews; but does it mean any thing for us? Is not this merely a Jewish question, with which we have nothing to do?"

This is another easy way of getting over difficulties. In reading the New Testament, when we come to a place where we are stopped by something which looks deep and is dark, we are often told, "That darkness is not depth: it is the shadow of a Jewish error which lies across the path."

Have we not often felt dissatisfied, when, approaching some great saying of Christ and his apostles from which we hoped to gain new insight, we have been told, "That has nothing to do with *us.* The Jews had such and such an opinion, and this was meant to show them their mistake?" So the great and earnest words of the Bible, which we thought to be full of spirit and life, are found to be only fossil remains of old opinions, of opinions long since passed away; good for nothing but to be put into the museums of antiquaries, and paraded by scholastic pedants.

But, after all, take it on the lowest ground, were not the Jews men? Did they not, as a race, represent some element, common, in a less degree, to the rest of mankind? and therefore is there not in each of us something of that Jewish element? Are not we also sometimes Jews, therefore liable to Jewish errors, and needing to have them corrected? The Jews did not live in vain: their strug-

gles, errors, hopes, were for the benefit of humanity. We were to learn something by their mistakes, and to be taught something by their experience.

Another way of treating such a passage is to translate it into some trivial, insignificant commonplace. Thus, we are told, our doctrine only means that "*God does not approve a man merely for going through a routine of outward, formal ceremonies, but for a thoroughly religious life.*" This explanation assumes that the apostle is here talking to simpletons, and that what he says is no more worth listening to by us than the prattle of a nurse to her infant.

There are, therefore, four ways of explaining this passage, none of which are satisfactory. These are, that Paul, —

1. Was teaching a self-evident absurdity;
2. Was teaching a self-evident truism;
3. Was teaching nothing, and only talking at random;
4. Was correcting a Jewish error, which only the Jews ever had, or are ever likely to have.

If these views are not satisfactory to us, the simplest way would seem to be, first, to endeavor to understand precisely what the Jewish error was, and then to see if there is any thing like it in ourselves, and if there be any thing which we can learn from this old argument which will be, not old, but new for our time and for all time, because a part of the tendencies of man. Let us translate these old phrases — *justification, faith, works* — into their modern equivalents, and see what they mean for us at the present time.

We have thus shown that we may be mistaken in supposing this Orthodox doctrine of justification to be of merely local and temporary interest, having no permanent value. It is not likely that a man like Paul, of so large, so deep, so philosophic a mind, should have devoted

himself so earnestly, and returned so fondly, to a theme involving no universal and eternal principles, whose interest was to perish with the hour. It is not probable, that, in this small volume of writings of the new covenant, — this precious gift of God to the world in all ages and in every nation, — so large a portion should be devoted to a wholly temporary argument; and, more than all, it is a most remarkable fact, that whenever there arises a man uniting a deeper spirit of piety with a larger sense of liberty than other men, — a man commissioned by God to give a new religious impulse to his age, and to help Christianity to shake itself free from the cumbrous mass of human forms and traditions which have crushed it, and to go forth in its native grace and loveliness again, — some profound instinct should always lead him to this doctrine as to a weapon effectual for pulling down the strongholds of bigotry, scepticism, and spiritual death. Sir James Mackintosh somewhere says, that the great movement which shook Christendom to its centre, and did more to change and reform society than the political revolutions and wars of a thousand years, originated with an obscure Augustinian monk preaching the doctrine of justification by faith. This acute Scotchman saw, what all must see who read Luther's writings with any attention, that it was no accident, no temporal interest, which led him to lay such stress on this doctrine. It was the soul of his preaching, the essence of his doctrine, the secret of his strength, the life of his life. And so, when Wesley and the early Methodists were called upon to pour new religious life into the English Church, they fell back on this doctrine, — this ancient sword of the spirit. And so we may believe that it has a value for all ages; that it did not relate merely to Jewish usages, but is a principle of vital and everlasting application.

No doubt, that if, by faith, we understand intellectual belief, or the assent to opinions; and if, by works, we understand true obedience; and by justification, final salvation or actual goodness, — there can scarcely be a greater absurdity than to say that a man is justified by faith, and not by works. To say that goodness, in the sight of God, consists in receiving certain opinions, rather than in true obedience, is a most unscriptural and irrational doctrine.

But none of the great reformers of whom I have spoken, and no profound theologians of any sect or school, have ever held the doctrines of justification by faith in this way. Neither Luther nor Wesley ever made faith synonymous with intellectual belief or opinion. "What is faith?" said Wesley. "Not an opinion, nor any number of opinions put together, be they ever so true. A string of opinions is no more Christian faith than a string of beads is Christian holiness. It is not an assent to any opinion, or any number of opinions. A man may assent to three or three and twenty creeds, he may assent to all the Old and New Testament, and yet have no Christian faith at all."

But what is the true doctrine of justification by faith, as taught in the Scriptures and as inspiring these great reformers? This is naturally our next inquiry.

There is nothing in the nature of man more paradoxical than conscience. It is that which lifts him to God; and yet it is that which makes him capable of sin, and without which he could not be a sinner. It gives him the sense of right, but at the same time makes him conscious of wrong. It makes him capable of duty, but thereby also capable of disobedience. It shows us what we ought to do, without giving us the least strength wherewith to do it. It condemns us for not doing right, even when we have no power

to do any thing but what is wrong. It shows us a great ideal of goodness to which we ought to aspire, and discourages us by the very loftiness of the standard. It tells us in the same breath that we are sinners, and that we ought to be angels. It seems, at the same time, to elevate and degrade us. It elevates us by giving a great object to life, and making it serious and earnest; but it degrades us by making us constantly ashamed of ourselves, and keeping us in a perpetual state of humiliation. Now, one of the chief peculiarities of the conscience is, that, beyond a certain point, the more we try to obey it, the less satisfaction we have. I know that this is not the usual theory. We are commonly told, that the conscientious man is always contented and happy, — satisfied with himself, and at peace with God. But facts contradict this theory. The conscientious man is apt to be very much dissatisfied with himself, — much more so than the man whose conscience is torpid and indifferent. There is comfort in faithful work; no doubt, there is great content in the steady performance of regular duties: but here conscience is subordinate to work. It is *work* which gives contentment; but CONSCIENCE, when thoroughly roused by the strong meat of a divine law, is the source of much self-dissatisfaction. How can it be otherwise? It shows us that we ought to *love God and love man with all our heart, soul, mind, strength.* Which of us does it? Do you? Do I? How large a part of our life have we given to the service of God? how large a part to the service of our neighbor? How often do we thank God for his goodness? How often do we pray to him? how often *think* of him? If we do not think of him, of course we do not love him. Love makes us very thoughtful of another's wishes. When people love each other, they joy in thinking of each other; they treasure souvenirs

of each other; they like to make each other presents of things they think will please; they steal an hour from daily cares or nightly rest to write letters to each other. Our heavenly Father's arms are around us all day, — his infinite bounty blessing us, his careful providence making for us home, friends, all; yet we do not think of him, or wish to do any thing to please him.

Conscience tells us that our heart is hard and cold to our best Friend; and that is by no means a pleasant piece of information.

Moreover, it is evident that this condition of self-dissatisfaction is not a good one. *Self-reproach may be a wholesome medicine; but it is a bad food.* We cannot do our work while we are finding fault with ourselves. The man whose conscience is always tormenting him is in a morbid state. He is a spiritually sick man, — sick of too much medicine. What must be done? He is always looking at his sins, and that disqualifies him for doing his duties. What shall he do?

This question, in its Jewish form, is stated thus: How SHALL HE BE JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD? If God can excuse him, he can excuse himself. How, then, can he know that God looks at him, not as a sinner, but as a just man, so that he can look on himself, not as a sinner, but as a just man? This is the problem. What are its solutions?

In the Jewish mind, the Jewish law had brought the conscience into an extremely irritable state. The same effect, in a less degree, is produced by the Catholic confessional.

Now, the consequences of sin are these: First, every act of sin brings after it natural evil consequences. It weakens the strength of the soul, it darkens the spiritual eye, it hardens the heart, it adds a new link to the chain of evil habit. By a result as inevitable as the law of gravitation,

every act of sin pollutes, darkens, weakens the spiritual principle in man. This we are taught in such passages as the following: "He who sows to the flesh," &c. We may call these results the *external* consequences of sin, because they change our spiritual relation and position in God's external universe. But there is another more awful and as inevitable consequence of sin. It alienates us from God himself. It turns our face from the Source of life and love. It makes us at war with him. It fills us with the sense of his displeasure, and burdens us with the consciousness of guilt. To escape the dreadful sense of his anger, we hide ourselves from him, as Adam did. It is a law of the human mind, that we dread the sight of any one whom we have wronged, because it condemns us. Perhaps he may be perfectly willing to forgive us, — perhaps he does not even know that we have wronged him; but we cannot bear to see him, notwithstanding. It was a profound feeling of this law which led an ancient historian to say, "He hated him because he had injured him." Thus an active conscience, if it does not make a man better, will make him worse: to escape its torture, he will plunge into new crimes. Some of the darkest crimes which stain the page of history may be traced to this source, — to the operation of a conscience strong enough to produce the sense of guilt, but not strong enough to produce the determination to reform. It is related, that when the mother of Charles IX. of France, and her uncles, were urging the young king to consent to the execution of some of the principal Protestants to whom he was strongly attached, after a long resistance, when he at last gave way, it was with these remarkable words: "I consent then, but only on one condition, — that you do not leave a Huguenot in France to reproach me with it." And hence the Bartholomew Massacre, which its authors had intended before only to include a few individuals.

So sin takes occasion by the law; and the commandment, ordained for life, becomes death.

The same principle operates with respect to God. We have broken his law. We feel that he must be displeased with us: we therefore hide ourselves from him, turn away from him, avoid the thought of him, are alienated from him. This is the greatest evil of sin; and this we may call the inward consequence of sin, because it affects our inward relation to God rather than our outward relation to the universe.

And, now, how are we to be reconciled to God? How are we to be freed from this sense of guilt, which falls on us in his presence, and makes us fear and shun him?

There are two ways in which, when we have injured our brother, and so have become estranged from him, we may become reconciled again, and freed from a sense of shame in his presence. One is by endeavoring to atone for the evil we have done by acts of kindness, by expressions of penitence. So, at last, we may feel that we have done him far more good than evil; and, though he may not forgive us or be reconciled to *us*, we, on our part, may feel freed from any shame in his presence, and be reconciled to *him*. The other way is by *his* coming to *us*, and *proving* to us, by his conduct and words, that he is not estranged from us by our bad conduct; that he loves us as ever. So he will overcome our evil by his good, and reconcile us to him.

The Pagan nations, in all ages and lands, have taken the first way of being reconciled to God. Oppressed by a guilty fear of their terrible idols, they have brought as gifts to their altars what they had most valuable: they have hung their gold, their jewels, in the temple; they have slain their cattle on the shrine. Still unable to pacify their trembling hearts, they have gone further, and sought to prove the sincerity at least of their repentance by self-inflicted

tortures, and by giving even their children's lives to the bloody power whom they worshipped. Hence sacrifices: they originated in the very same feeling which induces a man to give a present to one whom he has wronged, to appease him.

Pagan religions are founded, therefore, wholly on the first mode of reconcilation. The offending party comes to him whom he has injured, and does something to pacify him. But these religions never brought peace to the heart of the worshipper. After the wretched mother had dropped her infant into the burning arms of Moloch, she still had no evidence that his wrath was turned away.

In the religion of Moses, the first mode of reconciliation was united with the second. Pitying the weakness of man, God permitted him to bring his sacrifice of birds or beasts or the fruits of the soil, and place it on his altar as an expiation and atoning offering for his sin; and then, by a series of remarkable miracles, by his presence in the sanctuary, he answered the trembling suppliant, and assured him of his pardon. The Jew, who had broken any of the laws of Jehovah, knew exactly what to do in order to be reconciled to his national God and King. He had pointed out the way which he would accept. By certain acts of sacrifice and restitution, he became once more worthy of living under the protecting care of Jehovah.

This mode of reconciliation under the law was far superior to that in Pagan religions. It gave temporary peace to the conscience, though not permanent. It prevented the sinner from going further from God, though it did not unite him with God in unbroken union. It kept the conscience awake, and prevented it from being hardened. It was a schoolmaster, to bring the Jews to Christ. It was a preparation for a more excellent way. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the writer declares that the law was but the shadow

of that which was to come; that it could not, "by the sacrifices offered year by year, make the comers thereunto perfect: for then would they have ceased to have been offered; because the worshippers, once purged, would have had no more conscience of sin." The sacrifice made no revelation of God's character and love, planted no root of piety in the heart: it relieved the conscience only for this once, only with respect to this one sin; and there its influence ended. And therefore was a new covenant necessary, and promised by the prophets, and looked forward to by holy men, when they should be reconciled, not by works, but by faith.

We have seen that there are two modes by which alienation may be removed: first, by the offending party doing something to atone for his offence; second, by the injured one showing that he has forgiven the offence, and is ready to be reconciled without an atonement. The first mode is the way of reconciliation in Pagan religions; the first and second are united, in the Jewish religion; the second is the mode in the Christian religion.

In Christianity, in the gospel of grace, God offers pardon freely to those who are willing to accept it. He is ready *now* to receive those who are ready to come to him. It is only necessary to believe this in order to be reconciled. We are, therefore, reconciled by faith.

But we are said to be reconciled by the death and blood of Christ. How is this? We have seen the source of our alienation: it lay, not in God, but in ourselves. God had not gone away from *us:* we went away from him. He had not ceased to love us; but, by a terrible re-action from our sinfulness, we had ceased to believe in his love. "God's hand," says the prophet (Isa. lix. 2), "is not shortened that he cannot save, nor is *his* ear grown dull that he cannot hear: but *your* iniquities have separated you from your

God; and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he doth not hear." By an immutable law of our mind, God's wrath abides on us, and we cannot believe in his love. Here is the source of our alienation. Now, merely to be told that God is merciful, does not wholly help the matter. True, we say he *is* merciful; but not to *us:* we have sinned too long and deeply. Something must be done, then, to *convince* us that God is ready to forgive and receive us freely. The death of Christ is the fact which produces this conviction. The death of Christ, therefore, is not merely an *emblem* of God's love, but an *act* of God's love. It draws us to him. It changes our hearts. It melts our doubt, our distrust. It reveals to us our Father's love. The blood of Christ makes those who were afar off nigh. This all experience teaches as a *matter of fact.* It is the cross of Christ, borne by the simple missionary, preached by the devout Moravian, which, amid the ice of Greenland or beneath the burning sun of the tropic, reconciles the sinner to God.

And, if one asks *how* the death of Christ does this, I will briefly indicate what I believe to be the way in which it operates. We look at Christ, and see the brightness of God's glory, and express image of his person. We see a holiness pure and perfect, a character infinitely beautiful and lovely. We see how dear and near such a one must have been to God; and we hear God say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" and we hear him say of God, "My Father has not left me alone; for I do *always* the things which please him."

And now we look at the world, and see it "lying in wickedness;" we see men trampling on God's law, polluting his image, cruelly oppressing each other, and boldly defying and mocking at the Almighty. What does he then? For the sake of these miserable, weak, and wretched sin-

ners, who seem scarcely worth the saving, he sends his holy child among them; he sends this pure being, to have his heart rent with the sight and knowledge of human sin; he sends him to be cruelly and shamefully killed by a death of agony, in order that *we*, sinful and miserable, may be reconciled. We say, in the view of all this, "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us, how shall he not *with* him freely give us all things?" We say, "God commended his love towards us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us." "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us." Christ, "being lifted up, draws all men unto him." Thus, in the midst of the gloom of that horrible scene on Calvary, when the power of darkness was at its height, — that crisis of the world, when human sin stood at the flood, — the heavens were opened, and a new ray of divine love poured into the world.

Let us sum up, then, the doctrine of justification by faith as we have now explained it.

1. JUSTIFICATION is not the doing-away with all the consequences of sin, but only the consequence which consists in present alienation from God. It is precisely the same thing as *forgiveness*, or reconciliation. It relates to *present* acceptance with God; not the cancelling of the results of our past sins on the character, nor the hope of future salvation. It relates to the *present*.

The following passages show that justification is equivalent to reconciliation or forgiveness. Rom. v. 8–10: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. iv. 6–8: "David also describeth the blessedness of the man

unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

2. FAITH is not mere intellectual belief or opinion; nor is it mere feeling, nor a mystical emotion in which we are wholly passive; but a sentiment, in which belief, feeling, and determination are blended together. The belief is that Christ is the Son of God; the feeling is trust and joy in the love of God seen in him; and the determination is to rely on him as a Mediator and Saviour.

That faith is not a mere intellectual belief, but involves also a feeling of trust, appears from such passages as these: "If thou believe in thy heart;" "An evil *heart* of unbelief."

That faith is not a mere emotion, in which we are wholly passive, appears from such cases as those where men are exhorted to believe, as a thing in their own power.

3. WORKS, in this doctrine, include every effort to reconcile God by offering him any thing in expiation of our sin, whether sacrifices, sacraments, the assent to creeds, the struggle after feelings and experiences, or reformation of character.

And the whole doctrine of justification by faith may be thus expressed: —

If you are burdened with a sense of unworthiness and guilt; if something seems to separate your heart from God; if you want confidence to come to him boldly in prayer, — do not try to remove this difficulty by any effort to do something different, or become something different; but simply look at Jesus in his sufferings and death, and see your heavenly Father calling you to him *now* to be forgiven. Go at once to God through Christ. Repose on that love that will cleanse you, that will save you; and

nevermore doubt, even in your darkest hour, that your Father is ready to hear, to forgive, and bless you.

We have seen the origin, nature, and value of this doctrine. Let us now look at its history.

The apostolic church was founded on the simple doctrine of faith in Christ. It was not founded on any theory or speculation *about* Christ, or *about* his plan of salvation, but on *Christ himself* as the Saviour. All that the first Christians professed was faith in Jesus as the Son of God. They had been reconciled to God by him; they were at peace with God; they were washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they were happy. A deep and wonderful joy brooded over the early church. A hurricane of persecution and war raged around them: within the church, all was security and peace. How beautiful are the expressions by which the apostles describe the serenity and joy of the church! — "They ate their meat in gladness and singleness of heart; praising God, and having favor with all the people." New converts "gladly received the word, and were baptized" by thousands, in the face of the bitterest persecution. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them, that aught of the things that he possessed was his own." Whence came all this peace and union in the early church? Was it because they had attained to such clear views of truth, and all held the same opinions? So far from it, that some had not heard that there was a Holy Ghost; others did not believe in a resurrection of the dead; and many thought the whole Jewish ritual essential to salvation. Was it that they had become suddenly pure in heart, and holy in life, and freed from sin? So far from it, that we find the apostles exhorting them against very great vices, — against murder, theft, and licentiousness, — and condemning them for having prac-

tised gross immoralities. It came from the simplicity of their faith. They looked to Jesus, and their faces were lightened. They *saw* the love of God in him; they felt it in their hearts; they reposed on it undoubtingly. In quietness and confidence was their strength. Oh happy days! in which men's minds had not yet been harassed by thousands of vain controversies and empty verbal disputes; by questions, and strifes of words; by most profound theological discussions, ending in nothing but weariness; but were satisfied, that, if men would go to Christ, they would find truth. Oh happy time! in which men had not learned to dissect their own hearts, and pry curiously into their feelings, and torture themselves by anxious efforts to *feel* right, and tormenting doubts as to whether their inward experiences were as they ought to be; but believed that all good feelings would come in their own time out of Christian faith. Oh happy golden hour! when love and joy and duty were all one; when men did not prescribe for themselves and others a task-work, an outward routine of duties; but had confidence, that, if they lived in the Spirit, they would also walk in the Spirit.

That hour of simple, childlike faith passed away. Its decay appeared in a return to the old mode of justification. Instead of simply relying on what God had done, men must do something themselves to atone for their sins; they must do penance, and have priests and sacraments and masses and countless ceremonies to come between them and God; they must pile up a cumbrous fabric of religious and moral works, by which to climb up to God; until at last, though the doctrine of justification by faith was never given up, it was made of none effect by the rubbish of human ceremonies heaped before it. And then came Luther, armed with the old doctrine, to sweep these all away, and call men back to the simple faith in the Saviour. The pure

word of faith went forth through all lands, conquering and to conquer.

But there is a continual tendency to fall back again from faith upon works. Ever as the life of religion weakens, ever as the strength of holy confidence decays, men betake themselves to some outward forms or efforts. When they cease to lean on the love of God, they begin to lean on sacraments and ceremonies, on opinions and doctrines, on feelings and experiences, on morality, and works of duty. Ever, as the cold winter of worldliness and sin causes the stream of holy faith to shrink back into its channel, the ice of forms accumulates along its shores; and then, as the inevitable consequence and sign of the decay of faith, we find the Church becoming anxious and troubled, confidence giving way to anxiety, cheerfulness to gloom, hope to fear. Every thing terrifies the unbelieving Church, — new opinions terrify it, new measures terrify it. It has ashes instead of beauty, mourning for joy, the spirit of heaviness instead of the garment of praise.

I have said that there is a constant tendency to fall back from faith to works of some kind or other. The important question comes, How is it with us *now?* Does this tendency show itself in our present churches? And the answer I am compelled to make is, that *it does*, certainly to some extent, and in all our churches. They have all fallen away, more or less, from the doctrine of justification by faith. They have fallen back from the central point of Christianity, faith in Jesus, in different directions; and seek to be justified by a law, — some upon a law of belief, others on a law of emotion, others on a law of morality.

Do not understand me as saying that any of our churches have denied, or that they do not constantly teach, the doctrine of justification by faith. This is not the point. The Romish Church never denied, nor ceased to teach, this doc-

trine; but she virtually abolished it, and made it of none effect by teaching other things also. Is not this, to some degree, the case now?

Is there not a class of Christians, at the present time, who seek to make their peace with God, not by relying on Jesus himself, but on some theory with respect to his nature or person; not on his death, but on some speculation *about* his death, — some theory, scheme, or plan? Is it not the idea of many, that they are to be brought to God, not by faith in Jesus and his death, but by assenting to the correct doctrine about it? and accordingly they anxiously labor, and make it a WORK, to believe in the true theory, in order that they may be brought to God. I do not say that correct opinions on these points are unimportant; but I say that the faith in Christ which justifies us does not come from believing right opinions, but that right opinions come from the justifying faith. Are religious teachers now willing to do as Paul did, and say simply, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*"? or do they not rather find it necessary to say, "Believe this, that, and the other thing, *about* Jesus Christ"?

And again: is it not thought, that, in order to be justified and have peace with God through Jesus Christ, it is necessary that a person should experience certain feelings, beginning with a sense of guilt, a fear of punishment, and passing into a state of hope and assurance? And, accordingly, men make it a WORK, and labor, to have these feelings in the precise order and manner; and, until they can experience these feelings, believe that they can have no access to God. As before, I do not mean that these feelings are unimportant, but only that we should not try to work ourselves up into certain feelings in order to be just before God. It is faith in Jesus which is the *source*, not the *result*, of piety as well as of holiness. It is faith in

God's love to us which enables us to love him. The sense of pardon produces both the feeling of gratitude and of unworthiness. God does not forgive us because we have had the right feelings, but that we may have them. "Those love much to whom much is forgiven; but to whom little is forgiven, the same love little."

Were we ever struck with the remarkable contrast between the conversions to God in the apostolic time and those which we hear of now? How much more *simple* they were! A man is riding in a chariot, reading his Bible, and trying in vain to comprehend it. An apostle comes, and explains to him the prophecy, and applies it to Jesus. Presently they come to water, and he says, "See, here is water; and he goes on his way rejoicing." I fear there are not many churches now who would receive that Ethiopian as a member, if he could give no further account of his religious experience than is recorded in the book of Acts.

Do we say that perhaps there were other important particulars not recorded? We then say that the book of Acts, in describing this conversion, has omitted important particulars. Shall we say this of an inspired book?

But is it not, I say again, remarkable, that not only in this case, but in all the cases of conversion recorded and described in the Acts, there should be nothing of the descriptions which we read every week in our religious newspapers? In the case of the three thousand baptized on the day of Pentecost, we only read that they were cut to the heart; said, "What shall we do?" were told to repent and be baptized; joyfully received the word, and were baptized. Even the remarkable conversion of Paul was nothing like what we now have. How is this? That now we are not willing to trust to a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ; and, turning to God, we have a scale and rule of

religious experience, — a work which all must go through in order to be justified.

And what is the result of thus substituting for justification by faith, justification by belief in opinions, and by processes of feeling? Look at the churches where this has been carried farthest, and see the result. Religion becomes gloomy, anxious, and austere; it ceases to breathe cheerfulness and joy around; the gentler graces die before it; fear treads fast in the footsteps of hope; a stiff formality introduces cant in the place of what is natural and artless; the heart is stretched on a rack of self-torturing doubts and anxieties. The biographies and private journals of many eminent saints show us how little happiness they had in their religion, — how they were tortured by spiritual doubts, perplexities, and anxieties. The reason is that they rely on their *own* feelings instead of Christ.

And with the reliance placed on theory and opinion vanishes away the union of the Church. There are five sects in this country, all holding to the Assembly's Catechism, — a large and minute compendium of opinions; and yet which do not allow each other to commune with them at the Lord's table. The new-school Presbyterians would permit the others to commune with *them*, but are themselves excluded. The old-school Presbyterians would commune with all but the new, but are not permitted. Nay, the Associate Reformed, the Covenanters, and the Seceders carry it so far as to discipline and excommunicate their members for what is called *occasional hearing;* i. e., attending worship at other churches than their own. There was in the State of Indiana an old-school preacher, and president of a college, who refused to allow a Unitarian to give a literary address which the students had asked him to give, and which he had gone to deliver; and, in defending himself for this, called him a "public propagator of

infidelity:" and, within a mile or two of his college, there was a society of Seceders, or Covenanters, holding, like himself, the Assembly's Confession, who would excommunicate any of their members who should go to hear him preach.

There is, then, a tendency to rely on our own opinion and our own feelings, rather than on Jesus Christ.

There is another class, who have fallen into error of a different sort. They seek to be justified, not by opinion nor by feeling, but by action; by works of righteousness, honesty, charity; by the faithful performance of social duties; by an active obedience to the law of God. Looking at the Scriptures, and seeing in how many places we are plainly taught that we are to work out our own salvation; to be rewarded and punished according to our active goodness; to be judged by our works, — they say that a man is forgiven when he has corrected his fault, and not before; that repentance and reformation are the only means of atonement with God; that, if we wish to be forgiven, we must reform our conduct and change our character. Accordingly, they lay great stress on DUTY, and are continually exhorting men to the performance of their duties in order to be forgiven.

But there is a mistake here also, which arises from confounding two very different things; namely, justification and final salvation. We have seen that the consequences of sin are twofold, — external and internal. The inward consequence of sin is separation from God: the external is the weakening and debasing of the soul. The first consequence is removed by faith; the second, by obedience. Every act of sin pollutes, darkens, and ruins the soul; every act of obedience strengthens, elevates, and saves it. Obedience, persevered in to the end, insures the salvation of the soul. But, in order that we may obey, we must first be justified; for what is to give us the strength and the

heart to obey, except the pardoning love of God? It is this sense of reconciliation; it is this spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father," — which gives us the power to obey. We do not obey God to be forgiven; but we are forgiven that we may obey. Have we read the Gospels, and have we forgotten all the instances in which Jesus said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," before there had been any change of conduct, or reform of character? and have we forgotten the memorable passage in which he explains to the captious Pharisee why he does this (Luke vii. 36–50), — on the principle that the one to whom the most is forgiven will love the most?

To point out to men their duties, and tell them to do them, does not enable them to do them; but the sight of God's love in Jesus Christ *does* create in them new strength. That follower of Jesus, the first of our ministers at large, did not go to the poor victim of intemperance and sin, and tell him, that, when he reformed his conduct, he would be his friend. No: like his Master, he showed himself his friend while he was yet a sinner; and so gave him hope and courage to break away from his sin. He has left on record one of the most touching instances of the power of love to melt down the impenitent heart, in the case of a convict whom he persisted in visiting, though he was perfectly hardened, and filled with bitterness and rage. He persisted in patient attempts to soften his heart, till he succeeded, by the irresistible power of love, in making him humble as a little child. Suppose he had sent him word, that if he repented, and showed the proper spirit, he would come and visit him. He had not so learned God or Christ. He knew that he must overcome evil with good. Exactly so does God overcome our evil with good.

To tell men to do their duties that they may be forgiven, is to tell them to do what they have no power to do. A

confident reliance on God's love, and steadfast communion with him, is the only source of real improvement. When we feel that we are one with God; when we can go to him confidently as children to a father; when we can betake ourselves to his love in every emergency of life, — we have a source of real strength and growth and improvement within us. But, without this feeling of peace with God, the effort to do our duties only harasses and irritates our conscience: it produces weariness of heart, a constant feeling of unworthiness and failure, a constant sense of obligations and responsibilites which we do not and cannot fulfil. Duty is a weary task, a heavy burden; and our life is crushed down by constant anxiety and care. But if we begin right, and come to God first, and lean on his love, and rely on his promise, then we are filled with hope and joyful assurance, and failure does not dismay us: for we say, "God's truth is pledged for our success; and if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

That the doctrine of this essay may be misapprehended by some, and denied by others, we are well aware. If it were not so, there would be less occasion for writing. We suppose that objections will be felt in two quarters, — by those who think it dangerous to religion to admit that we can be justified before we have believed certain important doctrines or experienced certain peculiar feelings, and by those who think it dangerous to morality to suppose that pardon can precede reformation. But the more we read the Scriptures, the more we look into our own heart, and the more we become acquainted with our fellow-men, the deeper is our conviction, that there is but one source of true piety and sound morality, — a heart reconciled to God, and at peace with him. We do not under-

value correct belief, deep feeling, or active obedience; but we place them where they belong. They are the fruit of the tree, not the root of the tree. The root and source and beginning of all piety and holiness is simple faith in God through Christ. Ask yourselves, therefore, first of all, are you reconciled to God, or are you not? Are you living in filial communion with him, or living without him in the world? If unreconciled, think not to work yourself up into a degree of goodness or pious feeling without God. There is no strength where there is no confidence, where there is nothing to lean on, where there is hollowness within. Come then, at once, to God. Lift up your hearts to him. Say not, "Who shall go up to heaven for us, to bring him to us? Who shall go over the sea for us? His word is very nigh, in thy mouth and heart." Come, and be at one with God.

The above discussion will show what we consider to be the truths, and what the errors, in the Orthodox view of justification by faith.

REV. RICHARD PIKE.

Died at Dorchester Lower Mills, Wednesday morning, Feb. 18, Rev. Richard Pike, pastor of the Third Religious Society in Dorchester. He was born in Prospect, Me., June 6, 1813. He entered Bowdoin College in 1832; and, having supported himself in part by keeping school a portion of the time during his college-course, he was graduated in 1836. He taught an academy in Belfast two years and a half; entered the Divinity School at Harvard University in 1839; and, at the close of the year, was made a tutor in Bowdoin College, where he remained two years

and a half. He began to preach in 1841. He supplied the pulpit in Deerfield, Mass., six months; and declined a call to be settled as the pastor of the church and society there. He was ordained as the minister of the Third Religious Society in Dorchester, the 8th of February, 1843; and continued there in that relation a little more than twenty years. Mr. Pike was married March 1, 1843; and at his death left a widow, and four children, — one son, and three daughters.

He was a man of great fidelity, promptness, and perseverance. He was a diligent student; and, with a sound, clear understanding, made himself thoroughly master of the subjects to which he devoted himself. Few men have labored more faithfully, more zealously, or more intelligently, in all the various departments of thought and action which belong to the Christian ministry. He was a painstaking scholar and thinker, and not satisfied with the superficial or taking views which might first suggest themselves to him. He was brought up in the Orthodox faith; but a careful and conscientious investigation led him to adopt a more liberal theology, which, as he testified in his last communication to his people, he found sufficient for him in all the emergencies of life and at the near approach of death.

His health had never been strong, though he did the work of a strong man; and at length a confirmed consumption had so exhausted him, that, in the autumn of 1860, he left his parish; and, spending the winter in Kentucky, returned slowly in the spring by way of Maryland. He again entered his pulpit, and never preached with more vigor, acceptance, and effect, than in the carefully prepared but unwritten sermons which he delivered from that time. He manfully resisted the progress of disease; laboring all the while with Christian modesty and zeal in his chosen calling. He became, even more than ever before, interested

in his people and his work. But, at last, he was obliged to admit to himself, that his work on earth was drawing to a close; and then, he, who had struggled so earnestly for health and life, accepted this new condition of things with a perfect trust. He saw his friends and parishioners. He talked to them calmly and cheerfully of his prospects. The world to come, with the interests and occupations which we may carry with us into it from this life, was to him as real as the events of the day. On the first Sunday of the year, he sent to his people, from his sick-room, a letter, written as if from the eternal world, breathing out towards them the yearnings of a loving, Christian heart; and, when it was read, tearful eyes throughout the whole congregation showed how tenderly they appreciated and reciprocated their pastor's love. The impression which he made on those who visited him may be gathered from the following words taken from the sermon of a young minister, who first visited him in those last days of his earthly ministry. "I stood," he said, "not many days ago, by the bedside of a dying man. The destroying angel, who visits so many New-England homes, had long marked him for his own; and the failing strength, the shortening breath, the utter weakness of body, showed that the final hour could not be far distant. But, as he spoke with feeble voice, I heard such words of trust and resignation as revealed the work of mercy which these things had wrought within his soul. 'It is good,' he said, 'to be brought so low, that we can only give ourselves up entirely to the heavenly Father's will;' and as he said it, simply and calmly, the cloud seemed to lift from many a dark dispensation of Providence, revealing the divine plan, of which they form an essential part; and the divine leading, directing them to issues of infinite good."

At his funeral, a beautiful, discriminating, affectionate,

and Christian sermon was preached by his neighbor and brother in the ministry, Rev. Nathaniel Hall. The following exquisite hymn, written by a parishioner and dear personal friend, was sung, and seemed to express the sentiment, at that hour, of those who had been brought closest to him: —

"Father! our faith grasps upwards through the gloom,
Even from out these tears:
Not in the shadow of a hopeless tomb
Lose we our friend of years.

A dear and holy presence seemeth still
Within our midst to stand,
And such a silent priesthood to fulfil
As maketh parting grand.

We will bespeak each other words of cheer!
In this our saddened shrine,
Above the darkened altar and the bier,
See we a light divine!

Bid thou the life that passeth from our sight
Visit our souls with grace!
So may we also, through this mortal night,
Reach to thy holy place."

But the most affecting part of the service was the testimony of the large congregation of those who had known him best, who came up as a family of mourners to look for the last time on his calm and peaceful countenance, and who went away, each one, as if bowed down with a heavy personal grief.

We give below the closing paragraphs of a sermon preached in the First Congregational Church in Milton by his friend and neighbor, Rev. J. H. Morison. The sermon, from John xii. 23, was on the Great Emergencies of Life, and the need of preparing for them beforehand.

"For," says the preacher, "we all have our battles to fight. We all have our insidious enemies to guard against. We

all have our thorough and silent preparation to make, that we may not be taken by surprise, or found wanting when 'the hour' shall come. I have sometimes shown how this preparation of heart and life has manifested itself in the brave and noble examples of Christian manliness which have been matured and finished on the battle-field, — examples of Christian gentleness; of patience under suffering; of heroism in danger; of generous thoughtfulness for others, when that thoughtfulness was carried out at the cost of liberty and life, — examples so true, so winning, so beautiful, in the strong, the gentle, noble features of a lofty Christian manhood, that I doubt whether, in the annals of warfare, there is any thing more touching or more sublime. But there are other fields, which furnish as true a test of courage, of fidelity, and of all the great and generous qualities of a Christian manhood. In our homes, in the private walks of life, in secret communings of the soul with God, pleading for strength to meet the duties of the day, for courage to overcome its dangers, for faith to look through the darkness of the great and solemn hour that draws nigh, characters are formed, resolutions are strengthened, lives are lived, which in the eye of God are as great, as self-sacrificing, as inspiring, and as beautiful, as any that he looks down upon from heaven. In weakness and weariness and pain, with no great name while they live or extended reputation when they die, they faithfully fulfil the duties of life; they meet its great and solemn emergencies; they look through the veil, and pass beneath its shadows with calmness and a perfect trust. The fidelity of their lives so diffuses itself, the serenity of their courage so shines into the hearts of others, that they are among the dearest friends and benefactors of their race. We dwell too much on examples that shine aloft with a momentary splendor, and then pass away; and we regard too little the modest stars, which, in the quiet

order of their beauty, no one more conspicuous than the rest, shine upon us every night.

"Such a man as I refer to has been living near us for twenty years, — the modest, unobtrusive, intelligent, and faithful pastor of a neighboring society. He did not strive nor cry. His voice was not heard in the streets. He had no specially attractive graces of manner or of speech; but he spoke with the daily increasing eloquence of a devout and faithful life. They who were admitted farthest into the sanctuary of his thought were those who loved and honored him most. He was of a temperament rather silent and reserved; but he had no concealments. When the restraints which separated him from others were removed, no intercourse could be more genuine, or more confiding and endearing, than that which he held with his friends. There have been few pastors more devoted to all the highest interests of society. The cause of education found in him an enlightened advocate and supporter. The cause of good morals, in whatever shape it might come, had only to present itself, to find in him a hearty welcome and encouragement. The cause of the poor he searched out and befriended. All the great interests of life were dear to him. The holy, the affecting, and solemn sanctions of our religion, the duties which it enjoins, were enforced alike by his words and his life. The faith with which it would strengthen us, the affections which it would awaken and sanctify, the solemn peace and joy to which it leads, — all these found in him a willing, earnest, devoted advocate in the pulpit, at the communion-table, and, more perhaps than all, in the conversations of his sick-room, and the messages of love and of good cheer which went almost from his dying lips to those who should see his face and listen to his words no more in the accustomed place of their solemnities.

"He had labored painfully in his calling, and sometimes,

as we all do, with little apparent encouragement. The spirit, indeed, was willing and hopeful; but the flesh was often weak and desponding. His efforts for the highest good of those around him were not always — and, indeed, where are they always? — responded to as they should be; and so the good man was sometimes discouraged. An expression of anxiety settled upon his countenance. He often looked care-worn and weary, and seemed not hopeful enough for one who follows, though from afar, in the footsteps of him, who, in the darkest hour of mortal discouragement, could say, 'The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.' But as we came near to him, and were admitted to a closer confidence, we found, that, however humbly he might think of himself and of any thing that he could do, he never lost his faith in God, or distrusted the cause in which he was engaged, or the final success of what is right, and the overthrow of what is wrong. Even in regard to his country's trials, he never lost his interest or his faith in the justice and the final triumph of our cause.

"No one could struggle more perseveringly for life, — for strength to do something more in his Master's vineyard. He did not give up till every one else had abandoned all hope of continued life for him. But, when he did give up, it was without any reserve. He gave himself entirely into the hands of God. He had no fears, — hardly a wish in regard to himself. The cloud of anxiety and care was lifted from his countenance. As I saw him, a few weeks ago, sitting at his western window, his face illuminated by the light of the setting sun, there was a brighter illumination than that, shining through his features, and telling of a soul bathed in the peaceful light and love of God. When he thought himself dying, he said, 'Tell my people, that I beseech them to consecrate themselves to God in Christ, which is their reasonable service.' On the last Sunday of

his mortal life, when he heard the sound of the church-bells, he ejaculated the words, 'God bless the world in righteousness!' And, when he was just passing away, he sent this message to his Sunday-school teachers: 'Tell them to persevere unto the end.' His hour had come. Death had no terrors for him. His brightest days were those which he had spent on the border-land. He asked only that God's will should be done, and his name glorified on the earth; and this his prayer, we know, must be fulfilled."

TWO LETTERS, AND REMARKS ON THEM.

THE following letters, both occasioned by the essays on Orthodox doctrines which have appeared in this Journal, will explain themselves. They will be followed by a few remarks.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR, — You, I am sure, do not deprecate criticism, when it is honest; and are willing to give a reason for public assertions you have made. Without being captious or impertinent, I want to ask you upon what you found your description of Orthodoxy, on the 52d page of the "Monthly Journal." It is so different from any thing I have ever discovered in Calvinism, theoretically or practically, that I am curious to inquire where you found it.

It has always seemed to me, that one of the fundamental objections to the whole system is, that it confounds the moral judgment, and so leaves one wholly in doubt as to his reconciliation with God; that the burden of anxiety is never taken away. All biography is full of testimony to this fact. You must have read the Memoir of Dr. Payson, — a most remarkable attestation in this behalf; the case of poor Cowper, tormented into insanity by the preaching of Calvinism by his friend New-

ton, is another; and, to cite no more, the miserable cowardice of Dr. Johnson on his death-bed is fully in point.

Had you been describing Unitarianism as illustrated by Dr. Channing's preaching or by Henry Ware, and by the hosts of beautiful lives and deaths that have illustrated our faith, you could not have come nearer the truth; but, as a picture of Calvinism, it is, in my opinion, false both to the theory and the practical influence of that faith.

Truly yours.

REMARKS.

Our friend objects to the remarks on the 52d page of the February number of our Journal. They are as follows:—

"The next position of Orthodoxy is, that man, in the second or regenerate state, is a new creature. It asserts the change to be entire and radical, and the difference immense. Not only the whole direction of the life is changed, but the motive power is different, and the spirit different. Instead of ambition, there is content; in the place of sensitive vanity, there comes humility; instead of anxiety, trust in God. The burden of sin is taken away; the sense of our unworthiness no longer torments us: for God has forgiven our sins. Duty no longer seems arduous and difficult; for there is joy in doing any thing for the sake of God. The law is written in the heart. We are born into a new life, the principle of which is faith. "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God." This faith enables us to see God as he is, not as a stern King, or a distant Power, or an abstract Law, but as a Friend, Father, watchful Providence, surrounding Love, inflowing Life; Source from which we are always coming, and toward which we are always tending. This life of faith makes all things new. Old things have passed away, and the outward world is fresh as on the first morning of creation. Our inward and outward life are both new. We have new convictions, new affections, new aims, new hopes, new joys. Nature is new, life new, the Bible is new, the future world is new. Such and so great is the change which Orthodoxy assumes as the result of conversion."

In this passage, we have described, it will be seen, a great change, which is asserted to take place in the heart of man; and we declare that there really is such a change. But we do not limit it to Orthodox churches or communions, but quite the contrary. It is a change which Christianity, not Orthodoxy, produces.

But our friend objects that Calvinism often produces opposite and disastrous effects. No doubt it does. But these sad results come, not from that part of Orthodoxy which teaches the necessity of a new heart in man, but from that part which gives us false tests of this regeneration. When men are taught to believe that the evidences of the new life are to be found, not in Christian graces manifesting themselves in life, but in conflicts and struggles in the soul; not in present goodness, but in some past experience, — they may easily be disturbed. But this error I had explained and guarded against. I cannot conceive that it will conduce to such evils to assert the reality of a change of heart and life in man; and this Orthodoxy does, more emphatically than is done by Liberal Christianity.

The other letter to which we have referred is as follows: —

LETTER II.

Dear Sir, — I read with much interest your communications in the Journal on doctrinal subjects. I think, in order to *do* right, we must *believe* right. I often experience a difficulty which I think is common among people who think much upon the subject. The difficulty consists in forming an intelligible meaning to one's own self of the terms "born again," regeneration, salvation, saved, and the like. To explain these, theologians generally refer to the *New* Testament. The question in my mind is this: How were people "saved" *before* the New-Testament plan or "scheme" was divulged? How was a Jew saved? or how is a Jew now saved, who is pious, and never

heard of the gospel? This inquiry seems to me to be of very material interest; for God's plan is not changeable, — one plan for Jews, another for Gentiles. Cannot a man be saved by believing in the Old Testament alone? If so, the theological terms of the new Christian dispensation, or its derivatives, are not essential to salvation. John the Baptist, the first preacher we read of, did not preach regeneration or a new birth technically, but repentance, One to come, and kindness, &c. Now, could a believer of John's preaching be "saved" by such doctrines as are recorded of John? Can we suppose that those who heard John, believed, and died soon after, without seeing or either hearing of Jesus more intimately, were lost for their want of belief? Was John's preaching *regenerating?* Are the Old-Testament doctrines regenerating? Were there "*new births*" *under the old dispensation?* and, if so, what were they in their elements, as recorded in the Old Testament? In other words, was the world for four thousand years without a sufficient revealed plan of salvation? and was a *new* scheme introduced about two thousand years ago, so that the old plan is now succeeded by a new one? If the old plan was deficient, then we charge God with folly. If effective, why was it abrogated as much as is represented by the common theology of the present day? What would the Old-Testament saints think of the modern mode of "*getting* religion;" of the *essential* doctrines of the gospel, as they are termed by modern theologians; "imputed merits," "Trinity," "substituted punishment," new birth, as defined by the Orthodox, &c.? If the modern theology is essential to salvation, the Jews must be lost; and God then never gave them a revelation of the whole truth necessary to effect their salvation.

If the Old-Testament doctrines ever had power to "save," have they not power to *save now?* Is being born again a plan of only two thousand years, or is it as old as Moses? and was it understood by him and his saintly cotemporaries? I would like to read what you have to say on a connected plan of salvation which will cover six thousand years back.

Your sincere friend,

AN INQUIRER.

REMARKS ON LETTER II.

The writer of this letter has made a strong point, especially as against those who believe that those who do not attain to the Christian new birth are therefore eternally lost. I do not see what such persons can reply to this argument.

But I should reply to these questions, that there are *degrees* of salvation. There are stages of ascent in the religious life. The Heathen are saved by their religion, when they obey it, in a low degree. The Mohammedans are saved in a higher degree than the Heathen. The Jews are saved in a greater degree than the Mohammedans. Christians are saved in a still higher degree. Let the Heathen act up to their light to the utmost possible extent, and they cannot be saved as a believer in Christ can be saved. For salvation is holiness; and it is certain, that, the purer and nobler the truth, the greater will be the degree of holiness produced by it. A great deal of discussion in regard to the fate of the Heathen, of children dying in infancy, &c., would be saved by reflecting that salvation is not rescuing one out of an outward hell into an outward heaven; that salvation is not something poured into us *ab extra*, or given to us as one would give a sum of money; but that it is the result of a spiritual development. It is a state of the soul, purified by truth, quickened by love. Consequently, it is simply *impossible* for the best disposed Heathen, trained under Heathen influence, to partake of a high Christian salvation; for the same reason that it is impossible for a savage Indian to possess the moral and spiritual character of a pure New-England maiden. It is impossible for an undeveloped infant to enjoy the same heaven of thought and love that is enjoyed by Fenelon or Channing; but it by no means follows that the Heathen or the infant are to be damned.

RELIGIOUS ABUSE OF DR. HOLMES.

THAT superfine Christian publication, the "Boston Review," the motto of which is *Sanctos ausus recludere fontes*, has opened, in a recent number, the sacred fountains of its bitterness against Dr. O. W. Holmes. The article is too superficial to deserve notice, except as a type of the quality of that hard Orthodoxy which has its chosen *habitat* in this periodical.

We have not recently noticed the "Boston Review," considering its influence too small to deserve much attention; but, as a matter of scientific curiosity, it is sometimes well to examine, analyze, and class phenomena in other respects insignificant. With this view, we shall notice the article in the number of the "Boston Review" for November, 1862, upon "Oliver Wendell Holmes."

This article, while professing some respect for Dr. Holmes, attributes his success almost wholly to peculiarities of style. "Divest him of what is unique in expression," it says, "and American literature would be deprived of one of its best-known names. "His genius no longer appears," it asserts, "when he *retires behind the shelter of the style of writing* in common use among the scholars of our time and language;" meaning by this, we suppose, when he writes like other people. Nevertheless, although his whole power lies in his style, and though the writer thinks he has only "average talents," and no more power of thought than scores of men not known out of their own counties, yet he thinks Dr. Holmes "wise," with "a wisdom in advance of his age;" "soundly conservative" in many things; having "a woman's intuition," and "the nicest judgment" wherewith to weigh "the thoughts of our recondite thinkers." So, in the opinion of this writer, Dr. Holmes is a commonplace thinker and a wise man. He

is a mere reproducer of other men's thoughts, and yet has a superior intuition. He is "witty, full of new fancies and quaint bits of learning," but only remarkable for peculiarities of style. He possesses "knowledge, and an intuitive perception of truths," and "a wisdom in advance of the age;" but, "divest him of what is unique in expression, and American literature would be deprived of one of its best-known names." All this is as clear — as mud.

The main object of the article, however, is to find fault with Dr. Holmes's *morale*. He is accused, by this writer, of tyranny, cynicism, a most unlovely personality,* venom, bitterness, of being as great a sceptic as Pilate, of not having a heart, of unblushing egotism, of simulating pathos and sentiment, and of signally wanting "the charity of our divine Master"! All this because he criticises the Calvinistic theology.

Dr. Holmes, as every one knows who knows him at all, is one of the kindest of men. His brilliant talents are joined with a childlike tenderness of heart. He is as affectionate a friend as he is an earnest opponent. He will

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* "His personality; his *Persönlichkeit*, to use the expressive German word." As the German word is a precise translation of the English word, and not one whit more expressive than that, it can be only brought in to show that our writer reads German, just as he afterward talks of Fichte, *apropos* of nothing. In the same way, he brings in *Compte* (meaning, possibly, Auguste *Comte*), the "country parson" (whom he evidently considers a great genius), John Stuart Mill, Buckle, Sir James Mackintosh, Dr. Bigelow, Dr. Forbes, Dr. Gould, Sir Astley Cooper, Dr. Hooker, Dr. Cullen, Howe, Baxter, Jonathan Edwards, and Pontius Pilate, all in an article of six pages. He gravely assures us that the notion, that "disease is to be overcome by vital power, is by no means a new idea." We should rather think not. He says the cardinal fault of Buckle's book is, that it confounds "mere knowledge with moral power." It does no such thing. He seems to think that Compte (*Comte*) is still an obscure writer; only finding utterance in a Boston book, instead of being one of the best studied authors of the day.

attack any falsehood, however venerable; but he can not unnecessarily hurt a fly. But what would you have? This shower of vituperation is the necessary consequence of the injury done to Calvinism by Dr. Holmes's books. This injury cannot be forgiven. Hence these epithets are heaped on him at random. And, in truth, we cannot much wonder at it. Pity the sorrows of Orthodoxism. These men have been repeating, for the last thirty years, that "Unitarianism is going down." They have drawn round our churches and preachers and writings a *cordon sanitaire*, to prevent their people from knowing what we really say and think. It is as much a sin for the member of an Orthodox church to read a Unitarian book, or to go to a Unitarian meeting, as to tell a lie. This result has been attained by years of devoted labor. The prejudice against Unitarians is so great, that it really reflects much credit on Orthodox perseverance and assiduity. Now, it must be extremely painful, when they have this *levee* thoroughly finished, and our river of thought completely diked in, as they suppose, to find it overflowing them from quite another direction. Here it is again in Mrs. Stowe's books, in Henry Ward Beecher's writings, in Dr. Holmes's essays and novels, in the "Atlantic Monthly," in "Gail Hamilton," in the "Independent," in Robertson's sermons. Pity them. We should be sour ourselves if we were thus disappointed of the results of a quarter of a century's toil.

MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

March, 9, 1863. — Present, Messrs. Stebbins, Brigham, Newell, Barrett, Ware, Sawyer, Smith, and Fox.

The Committee on New-England Correspondence re-

ported in favor of granting the sum of $50 to the society in Tyngsborough, Mass., in response to an application received from them; and the report was adopted.

The Committee on Western Correspondence reported, that the society in Kalamazoo, Mich., had requested that the $288, held by the Association in trust for them, might be paid, as the conditions of the vote of Nov. 11, 1861, could now be complied with; and also that an appropriation might be made to aid them in completing their church.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, the request concerning the $288 was referred to the Finance Committee, with authority to pay that amount to the society, and to make the necessary arrangements for securing the church-property to the Association, in case of a failure, at some future time, to maintain Unitarian preaching. An appropriation of $75 was also made to aid the society in completing their church.

The Secretary suggested to the Board a plan for circulating some of the publications of the Association, which was discussed, but not acted upon. Mr. Ware offered to aid in the distribution of one of the books referred to ("A Selection from the Works of William E. Channing, D.D."), by placing one hundred copies in the soldiers' hospitals; and they were voted to him for that purpose.

The President presented for the consideration of the Board a plan for sending one or more missionaries to labor among the soldiers in the camps and hospitals, and to distribute the books and tracts of the Association. The plan was discussed at some length; but action was postponed until the next meeting, to give time for consultation with one or more of our chaplains.

The arrangements for the next annual meeting were referred to a Committee, consisting of the President, Secretary, and Mr. Sawyer.

After the transaction of other business, the Board adjourned to Monday, April 13.

March 23, 1863. — Present, Messrs. Stebbins, Hedge, Clarke, Newell, Barrett, Ware, Sawyer, Smith, and Fox.

This was a special meeting, called to take action upon the subject of sending a missionary among the soldiers.

The President stated, that, as instructed at the last meeting, he had consulted with Rev. William G. Scandlin; and that this gentleman felt confident, from his own experience while a chaplain in the army, that a mission, such as the one proposed, could be made successful, and be the means of effecting much good.

After some discussion in regard to the expense likely to be incurred, it was voted unanimously, that Rev. William G. Scandlin be appointed the missionary of the Association, to labor among the soldiers in the army of the Potomac for a period of three months, to satisfactorily test the value of such a work; and that a sum not exceeding $600 be appropriated to meet the expenses of this mission.

A Committee, consisting of Messrs. Stebbins, Ware, and Smith, was then elected, to notify Mr. Scandlin of his appointment, and to make any arrangements necessary to carry out the above-mentioned vote.

The Committee on Publications presented a communication from Charles Eliot Norton, Esq., offering to give to the Association 50 copies, in sheets, of his father's work on "The Genuineness of the Gospels," and 150 copies of his "Tracts on Christianity;" and also offering the use of the stereotype-plates of his "Translation of the Gospels, and Notes," for the issue of an edition, at cost of paper, press-work, and binding.

The following resolution was then unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the thanks of the Association be given to Mr. Norton for his generous donation of his father's works, and also for the offer of the use of the stereotype-plates of the "Translation of the Gospels;" and that, although our funds will not at present admit of our undertaking the reprint of the latter work, we hope to be able hereafter to accept this very liberal offer.

The Special Committee on the Annual Meeting reported, that it seemed to them best to make the public meeting this year strictly an *Association* meeting; to have the speaking based on the topics presented in the Annual Report, which should be read at the commencement.

After some discussion, full power was given to the Committee to make arrangements for the meeting according to the plan proposed.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on Publications, it was voted to give a copy of each of the publications of the Association to the General Theological Library of Cincinnati, O., in response to an application from Rev. A. D. Mayo.

It was also voted, that this Committee be authorized to furnish Mr. Ware for distribution in the soldiers' hospitals at the West, and Mr. Scandlin for his missionary work, such books and tracts as they may require.

After the transaction of other business, the Board adjourned to Monday, April 20.

INTELLIGENCE.

Mr. Frederick May Holland, a graduate of the Cambridge Divinity School in the class of 1862, was ordained to the work of the Christian ministry, and to the temporary charge of the Unitarian Society of Rockford, Ill., on Thursday, Feb. 26. The order of services was as follows: Voluntary and anthem; opening prayer, and reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. R. G.

Hamilton, of Belvidere, Ill.; hymn; sermon and ordaining prayer, by Rev. Robert Collyer, of Chicago, Ill.; hymn; charge, by Rev. A. G. Hibbard, of Aurora, Ill.; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. Carlton A. Staples, of Milwaukee, Wis.; address to the congregation, by Rev. Charles G. Ames, of Cincinnati, O.; collection for supply of reading to the army; anthem; benediction, by the pastor.

Rev. THEODORE H. DORR has resigned the charge of the society in Sherborn, Mass.

Mr. E. C. L. BROWN, a graduate of the Meadville Theological School in the class of 1861, has accepted a call from the society in Bolton, Mass.

Rev. JARED M. HURD, of Clinton, has accepted a call from the society in Fitchburg, Mass.

The BULFINCH-STREET SOCIETY, of Boston, have sold their meeting-house to the New North Religious Society, and have adopted their charter and name. A sermon suitable to the occasion was preached on Sunday, March 22, by Rev. William R. Alger, who will be the pastor of the united societies.

Rev. DANIEL BOWEN has resigned the charge of the Third Unitarian Society in Hingham, Mass.

Rev. FREDERICK A. FARLEY, D.D., has resigned the charge of the First Unitarian Society in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Rev. D. S. C. M. POTTER has resigned the charge of the society in West Bridgewater, Mass.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Since our last Notice.

Two Friends. By the author of "The Patience of Hope," and "A Present Heaven." *Et teneo, et teneor.* Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1863.

This is one of the books written by a pure and pious soul, which is also thoughtful and individual. The writer goes her own way; and, in her meditative reflections, throws light on many subjects.

Meditations on Death and Eternity. Translated from the German, by Frederica Rowan. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1863.

This book of devotions is taken from one generally ascribed to Zschokke, which has long been known in Germany, and very popular, under the name "Stunden der Andacht; i.e., Hours of Devotion." The late Prince Albert was accustomed to read it, which endeared the book to the Queen; and, after her husband's death, she had selections from the book translated into English, and printed for private circulation among her friends. The book is adapted to comfort the hearts of mourners.

Stories from the Lips of the Teacher. By a Disciple. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co. 1863.

We ought sooner to have noticed this little book, by our brother Octavius B. Frothingham. It is simply telling, in his own way and modern language, the parables of Jesus. It is the "Child's Commentary on the Parables," and far better adapted to its use than commentaries usually are.

An Historical Research respecting the Opinions of the Founders of the Republic, of Negroes as Slaves, as Citizens, and as Soldiers; read before the Massachusetts Historical Society, Aug. 14, 1862. By George Livermore. Boston: Printed by John Wilson & Son. 1862.

This pamphlet is one of indispensable value to all who are studying the subject.

A Christian Church: a Sermon, delivered on assuming the duties of Pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, Cincinnati, O., Feb. 1, 1863. By A. D. Mayo. Cincinnati.

We are very glad that our friends in the Church of the Redeemer have obtained a pastor, and one so active and able as Brother Mayo. We are also glad that the other society have our friend Ames with them. With such men, both societies ought to become active, Christian bodies, filled with faith, hope, love, and good works.

The Fear of God: a Sermon. By Robert Collyer, Pastor of Unity Church, Chicago. Published by some who heard it.

Discourse on the Dedication of the Church in Arlington Street, Boston, Dec. 11, 1862. By Ezra Styles Gannett, D.D.

Rev. Mr. Tenny's *Sermon on the Dedication of the Springfield-street Church,* Jan. 28, 1863.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

1863.			
Feb. 25.	From	"F." of Chicago, Ill., for India Mission . . .	$8.00
" 26.	"	Rev. Dr. Newell's Society, Cambridge, as a donation	100.00
" "	"	Society in Saco, Me., as a donation	32.20
" 28.	"	" " Leominster, for Monthly Journals, additional	2.00
" "	"	E. B. Reynolds, to make himself an annual member	1.00
March 3.	"	Society in Burlington, Vt., as a donation . .	26.17
" 6.	"	" " Fitchburg, for Monthly Journals .	32.00
" 7.	"	subscribers to Monthly Journal in Providence, R.I., through Rev. Dr. Hall.	63.00
" 9.	"	First Society, Baltimore, Md., for Monthly Journals	21.00
" 10.	"	Society in East Cambridge, for Monthly Journals	10.00
" 12.	"	Society in Buffalo, N.Y., for Monthly Journals	50.00
" "	"	" " Kennebunk, Me., for Monthly Journals, additional	15.00
" "	"	Society in West Dedham, additional, to make Miss Sally Gay and Mrs. C. Ellis annual members	2.00
" 13.	"	Society in South Hingham, as a donation . .	5.00
" 14.	"	" " West Dedham, additional, to make H. H. Sigourney an annual member . . .	1.00
" 18.	"	Rev. Dr. Farley's Society, Brooklyn, N.Y., as a donation	150.00
" "	"	Society in Harvard, for Monthly Journals . .	7.00
" "	"	" " Dover, N.H., for Monthly Journals.	9.00
" 19.	"	" " Scituate, for Monthly Journals, additional	1.00
" 21.	"	Church of the Disciples, Boston, as a donation	100.00
" 23.	"	Society in Shirley, as a donation, additional .	1.00
" "	"	" " Bernardston, as a donation, including an annual membership for Alonzo R. Cushman	11.00
" "	"	Society in Newburyport, for Monthly Journals	15.00
" 24.	"	" " Watertown, as a donation	60.00

ARMY FUND.

Feb. 25.	From	Noah Kimball	$1.00
March 2.	"	"a friend of the soldier"	2.00
" 3.	"	David R. Greene, New Bedford	25.00
" 5.	"	"a friend of the soldier"	3.00
" "	"	a friend, to circulate "The Home to the Hospital"	1.00
" 6.	"	Society in Rockport, Ill., to circulate "A Letter to a Sick Soldier"	7.00

March 7.	From	A. L. Bond	. . . . .	2.50
" "	"	a friend	. . . . .	7.50
" 9.	"	Mrs. L. P. Wood	. . . . .	3.00
" "	"	William Wightman	. . . . .	4.00
" 14.	"	Jonathan Stodder	. . . . .	5.00
" 18.	"	Miss L. E. Penhallow	. . . . .	1.00
" 23.	"	Society in Buffalo, N.Y.	. . . . .	20.00

CANDIDATES FOR SETTLEMENT.

This list will be published hereafter only four times a year, in the January, April, July, and October numbers of the "Journal." Brethren desiring their names entered, or address changed, will please indicate the same to the Secretary of the A. U. A.

The * affixed to the word "Boston" indicates the address, — "Care of American Unitarian Association, Boston."

Charles W. Buck	Plymouth.
La Fayette Bushnell, care of "Christian Inquirer,"	New York.
F. L. Capen . . . Care of Barnard Capen, Esq.	Boston.
William Cushing	Clinton.
J. H. Fowler	Cambridge.
Fred. May Holland	Cambridge.
Sidney H. Morse	Cambridge.
William Gray Nowell	Portsmouth, N.H.
George Osgood	Kensington, N.H.
George F. Piper	Cambridge.
Thomas H. Pons	Boston.*
D. H. Ranney	W. Brattleboro', Vt.
James Richardson	Boston.*
Ed. G. Russell	Cambridge.
Charles C. Sewall	Medfield.
George W. Stacy	Milford.
Livingston Stone	Cambridgeport.
L. G. Ware	Boston.*
Daniel A. Whitney	Southborough.
Samuel D. Worden	Lowell.
William C. Wyman	Brooklyn, N.Y.
J. C. Zachos	Cincinnati, O.